

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Wednesday, January 9, 2019

10:15 a.m.

Quincy Street Station

Committee Members present: Nancy Johnson, Shelby Fry, Anthony Fadale, Mark Webb, Mike Nolting and Maria Ruiz (on behalf of Mary Thomas).

Committee Members absent: Mary Thomas, Dennis Tenpenny, Libby Adams, Deborah Dawkins, Brian Snodderly and Linda Kehres.

TMTA Staff present: Denise Ensley, Al Bradley, Kris Lubber and Elizabeth Manson.

The meeting was called to order by Nancy Johnson at 10:15 a.m. There were no other guests present or public comment offered.

There were no corrections to the prior minutes.

Denise Ensley briefly discussed Topeka Metro's request for an increase of its current mill levy. Topeka Metro has not seen an increase in nearly a decade. The city council is scheduled to vote on the increase January 15, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. in the city council chambers.

Al Bradley asked the agency members to help remind their staff of the importance of advising scheduling when there is a change in mobility status with their clients. Ms. Ensley explained that a passenger's mobility status may affect the route or vehicle they are assigned to. If Topeka Metro has incorrect information, the bus could show up and already have all its wheelchair securement locations filled.

Mr. Bradley announced that Topeka Metro now has emergency cell phones for Quincy Street Station and our administrative office for use in case of an emergency. During an emergency where the main phones are inoperable, the emergency number would be posted on our website and on social media. Mike Nolting asked if customer service could be reached at these numbers when there is not an emergency occurring. Ms. Ensley said no. The phones are turned off and being charged.

Mr. Bradley announced that Safety and Security Supervisor Tom Baumgartner is now assessing all home locations once passengers are approved for the Lift service. This way, supervisors can address accessibility problems before they become an issue the operator must deal with out on route. This might include having no ramp, a damaged ramp, broken concrete, a pathway of mud, etc. Staff can review, communicate with the passenger, and offer possible solutions. The Topeka Independent Living Resource Center (TILRC) has been a helpful partner in this endeavor and has offered various resources to assist passengers. Anthony Fadale suggested contacting the public works department in cases where it may be a public street issue.

Ms. Ensley discussed various upcoming events at Topeka Metro:

- Martin Luther King Day (1/21) – Limited Holiday service
- Stuff the Bus (2/2)
- President's Day (2/18) – Regular service
- Daylight Savings Begins (3/10)
- "Spring Fling" Families Ride Free (3/11-3/16) – Fixed route buses only
- ACATS Meeting (3/13)

Ms. Ensley announced there will be a holiday schedule for the Martin Luther King Jr. Day holiday. Route and timepoint information will soon be posted on the website. Ms. Ensley reminded the committee that since many agencies and businesses are closed in observance of the holiday, all regular standing orders for Lift passengers are cancelled. Passengers needing rides for that day will need to call scheduling and book their rides. Standing orders will resume the day after the holiday.

Ms. Ensley announced the Stuff the Bus event will be held on Saturday, February 2, 2019. It is a partnership between Topeka Metro and the Amalgamated Transit Union #1360 to collect non-perishable food for Project Topeka. The bus will be staged at Dillons at 21st and Fairlawn. Ms. Ensley encouraged the committee members to help support the event. The goal is to fill the bus.

Ms. Ensley announced there will be a New Flyer electric bus on display and running partial routes on February 19th and February 20th. The public will be able to tour and ride the bus. Currently, she is unsure of the exact day, time or route. Nancy Johnson commented that it is difficult to hear electric buses approaching, which makes it hard for a person who is visually impaired. Ms. Ensley commented the buses have exterior speakers that announce when the bus is approaching the bus stop.

Ms. Ensley presented the November 2018 ridership report. Fixed route ridership is down compared to last year. Lift ridership is increasing, ridership was up 9.4% over last year. Revenue miles and hours only increased slightly. It is unclear as to why lift ridership has been steadily increasing over the past few months. FREEdom Pass ridership is still doing well.

Ms. Ensley presented the SOTO ridership report. In its first year (Dec 2017 – Dec 2018) 8,930 trips were performed. JEDO voted to continue to phase 2, which will begin January 1, 2019. The passenger will still only pay \$5.00 one way and the remainder of the cost will be paid equally by the employer and JEDO. Shelby Fry asked if an employee can still use the SOTO program if an employer elects not to pay the remainder of the cost. Ms. Ensley answered if an employer opts out of the program the employee is no longer eligible for the program.

Ms. Ensley announced JEDO voted to do a first year pilot for the NETO program. It was soft launched on December 18th with a full launch on January 1, 2019. Ridership ending on December 31st was a total of 50 rides.

Ms. Ensley announced the accessible taxi service through Capitol City Taxi provided 15 trips in November and 22 trips in December.

Mr. Fadale announced Laura Howard will be the interim secretary for the Department of Children and Family Services and KDADS.

Upcoming meetings for 2019 were scheduled as follows at **10:15 a.m. at QSS**

- **Wednesday, March 13th**
- **Wednesday, May 8th**
- **Wednesday, July 10th**
- **Wednesday, September 11th**
- **Wednesday, November 13th**

The meeting adjourned at 11:46 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Manson
Topeka Metro Operations Assistant